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New Version;

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A SARCASTIC POEM ON THE RE-
VISED NEW TESTAMENT, OXF-
FORD EDITION OF 1881

BY J. W. BURKE.



WICHITA, KANSAS
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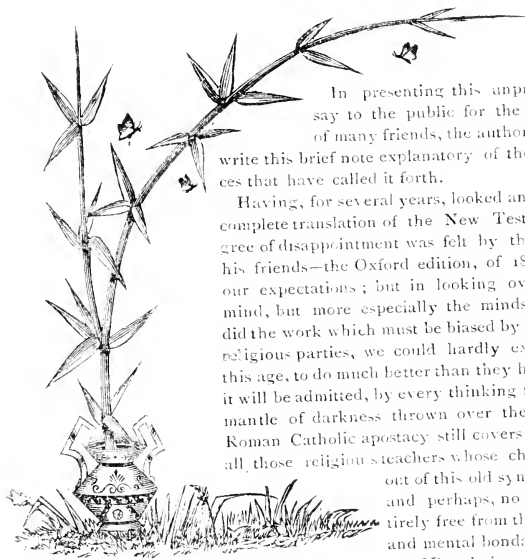
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PREFACE



In presenting this unpretending essay to the public for the gratification of many friends, the author begs leave to write this brief note explanatory of the circumstances that have called it forth.

Having, for several years, looked and hoped for a complete translation of the New Testament, a degree of disappointment was felt by the author and his friends—the Oxford edition, of 1831, not filling our expectations; but in looking over the public mind, but more especially the minds of those who did the work which must be biased by their various religious parties, we could hardly expect them, in this age, to do much better than they have done; for it will be admitted, by every thinking mind, that the mantle of darkness thrown over the world by the Roman Catholic apostacy still covers the minds of all those religious teachers whose churches sprang out of this old symbolic woman, and perhaps, no man is yet entirely free from this great moral and mental bondage.


We would refer the reader to the 17th chapter of Revelations for a description of this church and of those churches that sprang out of it, and which are teaching and practicing falsely, in order that he may more perfectly understand the subject under consideration and the marginal notes accompanying the text of the following lines.

Praying that, as the drop contributes to make up the waters of the globe, this little article may contribute to what has been and will be said to press the world up to the point when a new and complete translation will be made and received; to the point when men will not ask "What does our church teach?" but "What does the Bible say?" and just be silent where the Bible does not speak: to the friends of a pure version this essay is affectionately dedicated.

THE AUTHOR,

Wichita, Kansas, Feb. 1, 1839

THE NEW VERSION.

OD of the starry heavens attend,
And all the vast expanse.
And witness, by my theme to all,
That nothing comes by chance ;
That law the universe controls,
All by Thy guiding hand ;
That every sparrow fills its place
And every grain of sand ;
That every mortal runs his race
According to Thy will,
And by th' freedom of Thy grace
He chooses good or ill.

Poor mortals, fated here to live,
And fated, too, to die.
There's nothing that I would not give
To know the reason why.

We see but one contin'ous round
Complete in all its parts,
Where joy, and sorrow too, are found—
The ebbing of our hearts.

Could we but tune the poet's lyre,
 And all our thoughts control,
 Fain would we set the world on fire
 To comprehend the whole.

I place myself in days of yore,
 And stand in Luther's mighty stead,
 While dark the moral billows roar,
 A fearful tempest overhead.
 The stream of time is sweeping by ;
 Her waters, see ! are deep and dark !
 I hear ten million voices cry,
 The sword of Rome hath pierced my heart !
 A woman,* such as she, is proud,
 And ne'er embraces honest men.
 She veils her children† with a cloud,
 And will not own her daughters‡ then.

In childhood's§ bright hour
 I stood on the banks of a stream,
 And thoughtlessly plucked a gay flower,
 As homeward I tripped o'er the green.

Gay as a lark,
 As Light as the air.
 Free as a hart
 From sorrow and care.

Thus the reformers
 Who had come out of Rome.

*Church. †Members of her church. ‡The churches that sprang out of the Roman Catholic apostacy. §At the first the Reformation under Luther started out with bright hopes, but soon ran into a system resembling Papacy in many respects, and many would have returned to the old mother church if they had not committed themselves and been cursed by the bulls of the Roman Pontiff.

Just followed the paths
Where their mother had gone ;
But many in heart
Returned to their home
Thus only in part
We express their sad moan.
Mother,—O, my mother !
The pangs that pierce my soul—
There surely is no other
Who can my heart control.
Her gentle hand it stroked my brow,
Cold wintry nights she tucked my bed,
Oh, can it be that even now
That mother's form lies cold and dead !
Though many years have passed away
Since mother's lips* have pressed my brow.
And I, in turn, am growing gray—
There's sweetness e'en in mother's frown.†

Is it true? Can it be
That in looking to Jesus
Poor mortals can see !
Or is it delusion
Presented by men ?
As the woman suspected
'Twas gold in the hen.
Does it give to me spirit?
Does it give to me brain?
Or what is there in it
To lessen my pain?

*Since they had been in communion with the Roman church. †Many of the High Church of England would even at this date effect a union of their church with the old Catholic mother.

A phantom believed
Gives present relief ;
But when undeceived,
It adds to our grief.

Many years have been spent
In th' midst of this strife,
With a purpose intent
To live for this life.

This life in the future,
From th' which we are taught
There is no departure :
What a gem ! What a thought !

And giving to reason
The balance of power.
We conclude that man
Was not made for an hour.

So we find the book,
Whether fable or true,
Directs where we look
Bob I.*— and you

Can see that the aim
Is most noble and grand.
For all of its claim
Is to elevate man.

But whether it's human,
Or whether divine,—

*Robert Ingersoll, of Illinois.

If you're a true man
You'll have the same mind.

But all of your efforts,
If the Book is divine,
Will tend just to open
The eyes of the blind.

To clear away rubbish,
To scatter the mist,
To rouse up the sluggish
Who never should rest.

Do you see that old fiddle ?
We'll go to the dance;
Whatever the tune,
Like horses we'll prance.

Why, is this a book ?
Or is it a fiddle ?
No wonder men look,
And call it a riddle.

But stop, there's something in this matter ;
A sort of inspiration hue ;
For God himself is in the clatter,
And fiddles ev'ry tune for you.
Luther fiddled for the Pope,
While inspiration rose.
Tetzel followed with a rope
To bring it to a close.
The Holy See then felt the rage,
By inspiration given,

And vainly sought to send the sage
From trouble off to heaven ;
But Wesley now, with faith, comes in.
And inspiration higher.
We see the holy war begin
With balls of holy fire.

Spurgeon and Beecher on the train
Are inspiration bent,

And millions more, of lesser brain.
Whom God hath called and sent.

Sankey and Moody, too, are here,
Running another train,

Where Charles J. Guiteau lost his fear.
And fired up his brain.

Victoria Woodhull has the fire.
And Tilton, he hath found it.

And ev'ry one is called a liar
Tho will not cling around it.

Th' Oneida folks are all inspired.
Of quite a holy kind,

For when of *one* their lusts are tired
They will another find.

This is an inspiration rage
Of Pharasaic leaven ;

But all the good it ever does
Is sending saints to heaven—

Is taking wisdom from the world,
Its bigotry to give.

It crucified the son of God
And let Barabbas live.

Is hell inspired ?

So are men,
And they are fired,
Where? and when?
To do some hellish deed,
To form some ring or creed,
To keep men from the truth
Which mortals sadly need.

The dark clouds of Babel*
Sweep still o'er the sea,
And man is unable,—
Oh, mind is not free.

“BABYLON THE GREAT,” she’s
The mother of women
Who call themselves churches,
But still go on sinning.

Teaching that lewdness
Is holy delight.
Claiming by shrewdness
God gives them the right.

Teaching—though truth
In the Bible is found—
That their creeds, like a spade,
Dig the gold from the ground.

But to favor these creeds
Was the New Version made?
Or to darken the deeds

*The Babylon spoken of in Rev. 17 Chap.; or the Roman Catholic church and all that sprang out of it.

Of a villainous trade?

Take one expression—

Just read it yourself—

“All rights are reserved,”

Our aim is for pelf.

And look at Pneuma, if you please,

And tell me what is in it.

Does ten years thinking at your ease

Make angel winds of spirit?

Then Agiou Pneuma, *Wind Divine*,

They read it Holy Ghost,

And we are in a windy clime,

So God is with us most,—

And then to make the English clear,

And ev’ry word concise,

Anath’ma Maranatha hear—

A beautiful device.

Let Heaven attend and angels stare,

And men be silent everywhere,

And holy martyrs stand aghast

That such pretenders e’er should dare

To fill their bitter cup at last.

God’s Holy Word will still declare

To men and angels here and there.

His vesture once was dipped in blood,

Whose name is called the Word of God.

No spots are on his garments then.

Declare them sprinkled ye who will,

Are you among the baser men?

Will you a demon’s mission fill?

Why should you use such rant and tear?
My gentle reader, do you say?

An answer to this question fair
I will before you calmly lay.

Then where is Nasby? let me ask,
And why in Erin's isle is he?

He's gone to tell the world at last
Why Irish peasants should be free.

He sees in Kenmore, wet and cold,
Some thirteen fam'lies of the turf,

From infant up to grandsire old,
By British lords turned from their hearth.

He sees the land of Erin's isle
By British lords is now controlled,

And these poor sheep are penned awhile
Within this muddy British fold.

He sees, by reading English law,
These lords have never owned this land;

But like the hawk, to fill their crow,
Have wrenched it from the peasant's hand.

He sees Victoria in the game,
Both lords and knights of standing high,

The whole nobility in name
Commit this crime unblushingly.

Oh, Locke, I wish you'd tell it all,
I know you would not be believed;

But now your efforts they'll forestall,
And tell the world you are deceived.

Had I the power I'd tell it all.
This "joke" before me is so grave.

It is a deadly leaden pall

That would immortal souls enslave.

Is this a clique of church and state?
Of earth and hell combined for gain?

A few more days they'll have to wait
Before they gnaw their tongues for pain.

Then why such language should I use?
Would any still this question ask?

An answer then I'll not refuse,
But humbly will pursue the task.

There is a nation just and pure,
Her atmosphere a heavenly clime,

Her King all maladies can cure
And add eternity to time.

His law is perfect, sound and whole,
His people noted for their works,

His word obeyed will save the soul,
And leave no moth to gnaw their skirts.

But priests, and lords, and thrones combined
Have changed the statutes of our King:

Mixed up the human with divine
As though it were a little thing.

It's not in Kenmore, wet and cold,
These reverend doctors leave our race:

But close the entrance of the fold
That God prepared by sovereign grace.

Then wonder not, my gentle friend,
That timid men should speak so bold.

A little house will me defend
While wolves are howling round the fold.

By these and many other things we fear,
Done by this convention,

To make the English Bible clear
Ne'er was their intention.

These wise and rev'rend heads, |
These guides of fallen men.

(These holy fathers,) are they dead?
Or will they die? and when?

Is there not a hell?
I never had a doubt,

But were it not for such as these,
My God could do without.

Where could our God give such their due?
Unless there be a dungeon dark,

And how protect the good and true
From such devices?—*damning art*.

There is but one Almighty God,
One truth on ev'ry subject spoken,

Revealed in His most holy word—
A chain without a link that's broken.

There is no swivel in this chain.
God's Holy Book still speaks the same,

Though oftentimes it's twisted,
And if a hell must still remain

For those who will Thy Word defame,
My God, let them be blistered.

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